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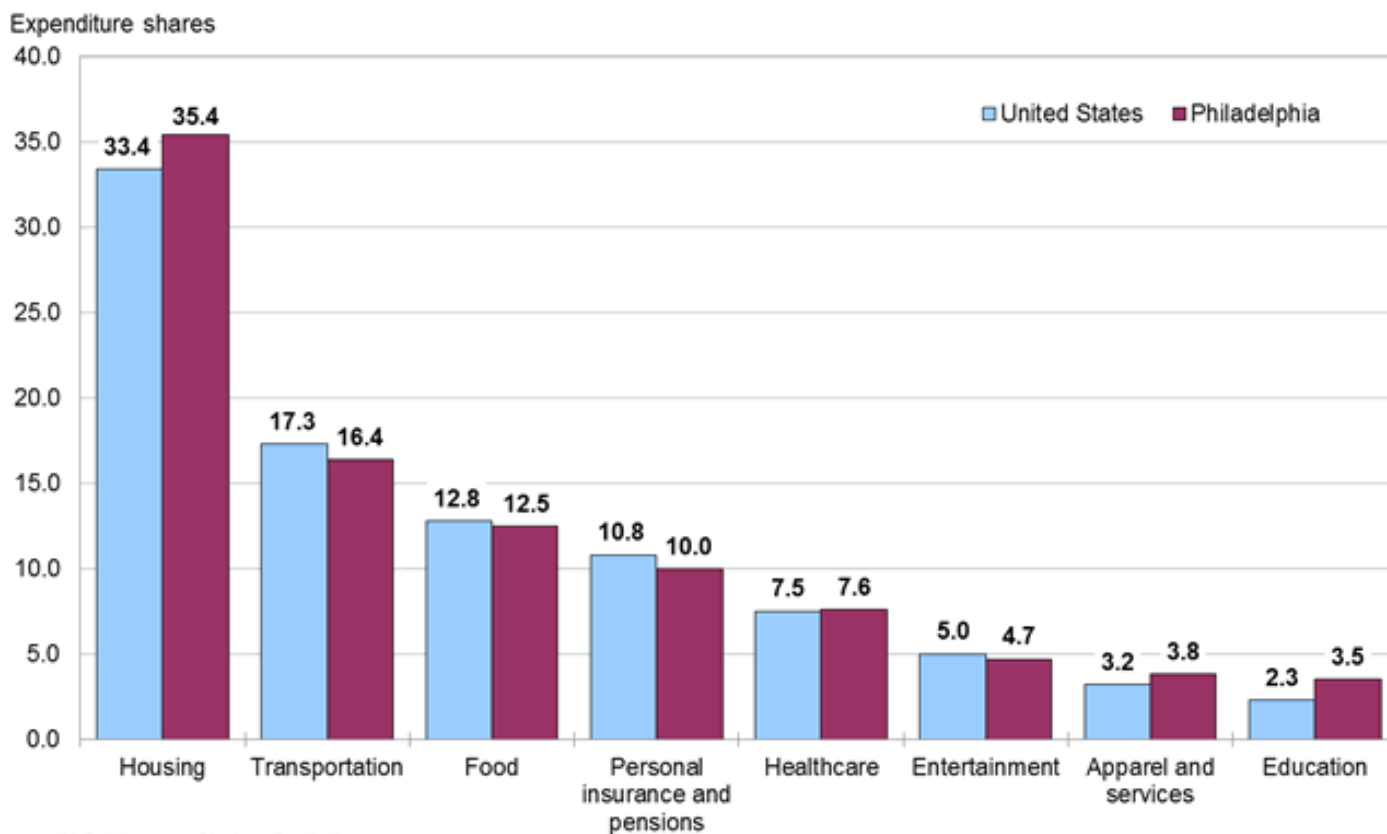
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## Consumer Expenditures for the Philadelphia Area: 2013-14

Households in the Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., metropolitan area spent an average of \$57,907 per year in 2013–14, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that this figure was significantly higher than the \$52,284 average expenditure level for households in the United States. Philadelphia-area households allocated their dollars similarly among most of the eight major categories, with only three differing significantly from the U.S. average. For example, the share of expenditures for education, which accounted for 3.5 percent of the average household's budget in the Philadelphia area, was significantly higher than the national average of 2.3 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table 1](#).)

**Chart 1. Percent distribution of average annual expenditures selected categories in the United States and Philadelphia metropolitan area, 2013-14**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Highlights of the Philadelphia area's 2013–14 spending patterns:

- **Housing:** This was the largest expenditure category for Philadelphia-area households and averaged \$20,475. Housing accounted for 35.4 percent of the area's household budget, significantly higher than the 33.4-percent U.S. average. (See [table 1.](#)) Among 18 metropolitan areas nationwide for which data are available, Philadelphia was 1 of 8 areas to have housing expenditures which were significantly higher than the national average. Housing expenditures among the 18 areas ranged from 39.6 percent in New York to 30.2 percent in Detroit. (See [table 2.](#))
- **Transportation:** A Philadelphia-area household spent 16.4 percent of its budget on transportation, not significantly different from the national average of 17.3 percent. Of the \$9,500 in annual transportation expenditures in Philadelphia, 92.1 percent was spent buying and maintaining private vehicles; this compared to the national average of 93.8 percent.
- **Food:** The portion of a Philadelphia household's budget spent on food, 12.5 percent, was not significantly different from the 12.8-percent U.S. average. Philadelphia-area households spent \$4,327, or 59.6 percent, of their food dollars on food prepared at home and \$2,936 (40.4 percent) on food prepared away from home. In comparison, the average U.S. household spent 59.5 percent of its food budget on food prepared at home and 40.5 percent on food prepared away from home.

## Additional Information

Data in this release are from the Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE), which the U.S. Census Bureau conducts for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The data in this release were averaged over a 2-year period, 2013 and 2014.

A household in the CE survey is defined as a consumer unit which consists of members related by blood, marriage, adoption, or other legal arrangement; a single person living alone or sharing a household with others but who is financially independent; or two or more persons living together who share responsibility for at least 2 out of 3 major types of expenses – food, housing, and other expenses. The terms household or consumer unit are used interchangeably for convenience.

Differences in spending among metropolitan areas may reflect differences in the cost of living, but they also may reflect other causes. Spending differences may result from different consumer preferences or variations in demographic characteristics, such as household size, age, or income levels. However, expenditure shares, or the percentage of a household's budget spent on a particular category, can be used to compare spending patterns across areas. Sample sizes for the metropolitan areas are much smaller than for the nation, so the U.S. estimates and year-to-year changes are more reliable than those for the metropolitan areas. Users should also keep in mind that prices for many goods and services have changed since the survey was conducted.

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with our ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. A large difference between two values may not be statistically significant, while a small difference could be significant; both the sample size and the variation among the values in the sample affect the relative error of the estimates.

For additional technical and related information, see [www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch16.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch16.pdf). Data for the nation, the four geographic regions of the U.S., and 18 metropolitan areas nationwide are available at [www.bls.gov/cex/tables.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cex/tables.htm). Metropolitan definitions used in the survey are available at [www.bls.gov/regions/ce\\_areadef.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/regions/ce_areadef.pdf). The metropolitan area discussed in this release is Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., which includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in

Pennsylvania; Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem Counties in New Jersey; New Castle County in Delaware; and Cecil County in Maryland. Metropolitan area news releases for the Consumer Expenditure Survey are available at [www.bls.gov/regions/consumerspending.htm](http://www.bls.gov/regions/consumerspending.htm).

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

**Table 1. Average annual expenditures, characteristics and percent distribution, United States and Philadelphia metropolitan area, 2013-14**

Category	United States	Philadelphia
<b>Consumer unit characteristics:</b>		
Income before taxes .....	\$65,339	\$71,457
Age of reference person .....	50.2	52.0
<b>Average number in consumer unit:</b>		
People .....	2.5	2.4
Children under 18 .....	0.6	0.5
Adults 65 and older .....	0.4	0.4
Earners .....	1.3	1.3
Vehicles .....	1.9	1.6
Percent homeowner .....	63.0	65.0
Average annual expenditures .....	\$52,284	\$57,907*
Percent distribution .....	100.0	100.0
Food .....	12.8	12.5
Alcoholic beverages .....	0.9	1.1
Housing .....	33.4	35.4*
Apparel and services .....	3.2	3.8
Transportation .....	17.3	16.4
Healthcare .....	7.5	7.6
Entertainment .....	5.0	4.7
Personal care products and services .....	1.2	1.2
Reading .....	0.2	0.2
Education .....	2.3	3.5*
Tobacco products and smoking supplies .....	0.6	0.6
Miscellaneous .....	1.3	1.0*
Cash contributions .....	3.5	2.1*
Personal insurance and pensions .....	10.8	10.0*

Note: An asterisk (\*) represents a statistically significant difference from the U.S. average at the 95-percent confidence level

**Table 2. Percent share of average annual expenditures for housing, transportation, and food, United States and 18 metropolitan areas, 2013-14**

Area	Housing	Transportation	Food
United States .....	33.4	17.3	12.8
Atlanta .....	33.2	16.4	12.8
Baltimore .....	33.9	15.0	11.5
Boston .....	33.3	15.1*	11.7*
Chicago .....	35.1*	15.2*	12.7
Cleveland .....	31.0*	18.0	13.7
Dallas .....	33.1	18.3	12.7
Detroit .....	30.2*	19.2*	12.4
Houston .....	33.4	17.9	12.1
Los Angeles .....	38.7*	15.0*	13.1
Miami .....	39.4*	16.8	13.0
Minneapolis .....	32.4	17.9	11.3*
New York .....	39.6*	13.4*	11.6*
Philadelphia .....	35.4*	16.4	12.5
Phoenix .....	34.2	19.4	13.9
San Diego .....	37.6*	16.3	11.0*
San Francisco .....	37.3*	13.7*	11.9
Seattle .....	35.0	15.4*	12.3
Washington .....	35.8*	18.0	10.0*

\* Statistically significant difference from the U.S. average at the 95-percent confidence level.